

SUCKERED

They suckered me
he said
fifteen years of
studying the poem
under Creeley &
Ginsberg &
they suckered me
they got me
playing with words
twisting the syllables
like taffy at a circus
hefting the concepts
like a Mayflower moving man
planting abstractions like
bombs in playpens
they suckered me
for fifteen years
I've been rejected
for fifteen years
the editors have
turned me down
but now I see
now I see what they
hid from my eyes
you've got to
tell it like it is
lay it on the line
hard language
the language of the streets
like Williams said
like Pound &
Charles Bukowski
it's a matter of honesty
it's existential courage
I suppose
It's
knowing where you're at.

TINY CREATURES AT OUR FEET

When we began to split the
pile of wood we
stole the homes
of mice and tiny rabbits.

All day the dogs and cats
moved thru the high grass,
bringing mauled and squirming
creatures to our feet,
their eyes full of questions,
dimly knowing that somewhere
something had gone wrong.

-- John Bennett

Ellensburg WA

SATCHEL PAIGE

this here poet I know is just like
Satchel Paige
all these years he been whiffing them
left & right, mowing them down
one after the other
no one paying much attention

on account it wasn't the
major leagues you know
& there was the color thing too
I mean major league pitchers
just didn't look like old
Satchel Paige
but other pitchers knew
knew he was the best
there was, period.

then they bring him up
to the bigs & he can't
hardly throw no more
he's too old
his arm's wore out
something.

but his legend remains
& those early poems he wrote
when no one was looking
we'll put him in the
Hall of Fame
just because of them.

DEATH IN THE AFTERNOON

nothing like turning on the tv
3:30 in the afternoon
quart of beer in hand
expecting Norman Mailer
on the Merv Griffin show
& settling for one of the Gabors
who talks of beauty & fashion
she's a dress designer
or something
as well as whatever else
she is
shows us what she calls
the Gabor look
parading around the stage
in diamonds & silk &
you know it almost works
I'm ready to jack off
then there's a close-up
of the neck all the
wrinkled folds of skin
the silk can't
camouflage
the neck of an old woman
it's awful to look at
though I doubt Mailer
would have been much
better.